Re Zero Detailed Summary Phase 6

This is it. We're here. At the final phase of arc 4, where the finish line rests dimly on the horizon, beyond a crapton of hugelong chapters which are all concentrated in this little area. The journey yet continues.

As always, reminders:

Every word in this document is subject entirely to my whims, and that may include or not include paraphrasing and silliness. It would be safer to consider the document as something a friend slipped to you in private rather than a definitive translation.

Proofreading and editing is still spotty or absent. Will the day ever come where I venture back here, to these chapters, cleansing them of their typo-ridden pox and making them read prettier!? Probably no.

My Japanese is still not five thousand degrees of perfect and my qualifications for attempting to translate amount to 1: having a keyboard and 2: nobody to stop me. Mistranslations will happen but hopefully not to a life-threatening degree.

Previous chapters can be found at https://mega.nz/#F!VNdzDYYK!nK9fNU3LeprlZSbRAnlsRg while I can be contacted at ankaa.burner@gmail.com

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If you did not see the title 'Phase 6' and immediately think, 'oh, all this crap is just the advisories time to scroll my way down to the chapter,' then it may be because you are lost (or enjoy redundancy). This document begins at chapter 118 of arc 4 of the WN version of Re: Zero, and is forbidden for eyes which have not scanned over the previous 117 chapters. If you are a person possessing such virginal pupils, you must turn back! This place is not for you! Please locate the previous chapters and return here once ready.

This page is still a little empty and so I considered whether I should shove a picture on it, then realised that I had no recent doodles of Re: Zero characters that I would want to expose to the public. So I considered: am I shameless enough to put pictures of characters which have nothing to do with Re: Zero on an opening page for a document which is entirely Re: Zero?

I decided no, my shamelessness is not powerful enough for that. Congratulations there is no picture and instead I invite you to meditate upon this blank space:

CHAPTER 118: THE DAY ALPHA ORIONIS SMILED

Emilia walks leisurely, with practised gait, along the unmarked trail with its tall tall trees.

She steps on grass, treads on earth, taking care not to trample on any flowers hidden beneath the tree-roots. She feels the hard ground beneath her feet, but Emilia finds it strange—after all, she is dreaming.
Nevermind how it goes in an ordinary dream, here she can feel the texture of the tree-bark, smell the sweet aroma of the flowers, and feel the warmth of the breeze.

Emilia: “It's a dream world, but I can feel everything like normal. Why is that?”

Echidna: “Dream world, would be an entirely figurative descriptor for it. This place is reconstructed from the memories of the TRIAL's challenger, a space fitting for the appellation 'alternate world', which drags in only the consciousness. These are things withdrawn from the memory of you, the challenger, so of course your senses can interact with this world. Conversely, if I attempt to touch the ground or perhaps the trees, I won't receive any tactile sensation.”

Emilia: “So that's it. ...Can I go on a rampage, and turn the forest into a hodgepodge?”

Echidna: “What a barbaric and witchlike idea. Indeed you have tactile sense, but you can't influence this world. To add, you and the living beings recreated in this world can't even touch each other. Though, if the TRIAL were in another form then it would possible.”

Emilia: “Another form?”

Echidna: “Full of questions, aren't you. How about using your own head for once? Seek and you shall find. Though for you, constantly spoiled and fawning on men as you are, I'd say it's outside your capacity.”

Emilia: “Hmp...”

Behind Emilia who takes the lead, the WITCH OF GREED follows while keeping a fixed distance. Echidna gives her venomous lecture, sneering at Emilia's ignorance with her expression apathetic. But, despite that animosity, her statements are legitimate.

Emilia puts her hand to her mouth and thinks.
There is a difference between touchable memories and untouchable memories. A method for Emilia, with only her mind present in this world, to touch the people who walk about these memories.

Emilia: “I thought about it but I couldn't get it. Tell me the answer.”

Echidna: “...”

Emilia: “What's wrong? Do you have a tummy ache?”

Echidna: “Your attitude gives me pyrosis. While it certainly feels unpleasant, if you exclude him and my friends, the only one who could inspire such emotion in me would probably just be you.”

Emilia: “Echidna, you have friends.”

How nice, is the nuance in Emilia's muttering. Echidna sighs.

It seems she did not take Emilia's statement with the nicest of interpretations. Emilia hesitates on how to reword it to make it communicate properly, when,

Echidna: “The regrets of the past glimpsed in the TRIAL do not consist of only a single scene for everybody.”

Emilia: “Erm?”

Echidna: “There are pasts fixed on a single moment of time which you regret. And differing from those, there are also ongoing... for example, pasts where you regret your relationship with somebody. In the second case, the recreated past will not be a single isolated scene, but will instead recreate those characters as they are inside the challenger. You could speak with them, touch them, even make happy love with them.”

Emilia: “...Okay. So that's how it works.”

Emilia nods in comprehension.
Indeed, REGRETS can have these distinctions. Some people will regret that they got in a fight with somebody, and some people will regret everything that came in the aftermath.
Which to conquer was entirely dependant on the person.

Emilia: “You don't like me, but you answered my question for me.”

Echidna: “Because I'm just sooo nice a person, is the kind of misunderstanding I'd loathe for you to make. I've done nothing humiliating enough for you to regard me favourably. That I wind up answering these questions is entirely a result of my disposition.”

Emilia: “Right, right.”

It doesn't put her in the most jovial of moods, but Emilia has more or less figured out how to interact with the icy Echidna.
Echidna definitely hates Emilia the way that one would hate a serpent, but Emilia cannot dislike Echidna. She doesn't know her well enough for that.
Reasoning backwards, it means that Echidna knows Emilia well enough to hate her this much—but she would receive no opportunity to ask about it here.

???: “—Huhu! Ahahha! Here! This way!”
Emilia: “Eep!”

The sudden and loud voice of a young girl calling from behind her surprises Emilia.
She freezes, when a little girl circles around her to run past from behind her to afront her and away.
It shocks Emilia that she had managed to come so close without noticing her at all, but she promptly senses that this was not because of her own negligence or inattention.

The girl who overtook Emilia runs about, her long silver hair flapping in disarray.
Amethyst eyes, a well-worn children's vestment. She dashes confidently around the forest, her face as she laughs very familiar to Emilia.
This person is her young self—back when she knew no REGRET, Emilia in a bygone time.

Echidna: “Utterly ignorant, but it's still astonishing how dumbly blithe she looks.”

Emilia: “Don't start saying things about little me too. And... we'll find out soon whether or not that's

anything bad.”

Such is Echidna's prejudiced judgement of the frolicking young Emilia.
Feeling a throbbing in her temples after objecting to Echidna's appraisals, Emilia grimaces.

Her contract with Puck has been aborted, and her sealed memories are resurrecting one after another.
Her days spent with Mother Fortuna. Juice's group and how they brought supplies to the village.
The seal, and the FAIRIES who helped her escape the Princess Room. And, the day that she met Juice who she wasn't meant to meet, and they became friends.

Emilia: “How did I manage to live without memory of these things, like it was completely normal...?”

Emilia's memory was fraught with holes, but Emilia had lived without finding anything strange about that at all.
Who knows what would have happened if she had noticed the pitfalls without any involvement of the TRIAL—but there would be no recovering from it. Perhaps Puck, who would've known Emilia's abnormality better than anyone, didn't tell her about because he understood that.

Pieces of her reviving memory still remain sleeping inside the ajar door.
She had not been able to spy their entirety before challenging the TRIAL, but that was fine.

Here, in this TRIAL, all of Emilia's sealed memories would likely be revealed.
She can figure that something inside her will change definitively after having seen them.

Emilia: “But I'm not scared of that any more.”

Echidna: “Crying and bawling you cling to men or your father. You're going to stop making decisions typical of the filthy woman you are?”

Emilia: “I know they'd probably forgive me... but I don't want to do that, and for me or for Subaru to feel disillusioned because of it. I don't want to be weak, and rationalising that I can stay weak.”

Echidna: “...Do whatever you want. All I'm doing is stockpiling yet another result in my memory.”

No matter how much spite Echidna spits, nothing can shake Emilia's nerve now.
Perhaps having perceived that over their conversation, Echidna resignedly closes her mouth.

The witch's comments have abated in their fury. Emilia gives a sigh and devotes her attention to her past.
In front of her is Emilia, running about guilelessly. And,

???: “Please wait, Emilia-sama. It is perilous to traipse the area in this way.”

Emilia: “I'm not in danger, I'm fine. You're the one with scraped knees, Juice.”

Juice: “No injury to myself is anything for concern. But any injuries you may sustain are dire. Not even my death would constitute recompense for wounds imposed on your gorgeous skin.”

Chasing the frolicking Emilia is a tall man in black habit—Juice. His stern face gives rise to a definite gentleness and affection as he softly chides Emilia, who continues capering heedless of his

warning.

???: “Juice. The way you said that actually made it sound sooo dirty.”

Juice: “My intentions in speaking had been otherwise... never would I consider Emilia-sama in such a manner.”

The person who addresses Juice is a woman following behind him as he follows Emilia—a woman with short silver hair, sharp eyes and beautiful looks.
Having spotted her, Emilia's throat feels to cramp.

Emilia: “Mother Fortuna...”

Although aware that this healthy sight of her mother is only occurring in a memory, Emilia cannot keep herself from feeling the urge to cry.
Emilia loved her. Respected her more than any other. Even after all this time, Emilia considers Mother Fortuna a member of her family at least as precious as Puck.

Fortuna goes to stand beside the worried-looking Juice, casting him a glance.

Fortuna: “And that's not just for Emilia, it'd sound that way no matter who you said it to. You're supposed to be getting on in years by now, Juice.”

Juice: “Age is something which presents rather little significance to me. Speaking in reference to living for a long duration of time, by my view even yourself and Emilia-sama would be infants.”

Fortuna: “I'm an infant by his view... hrm.”

Fortuna lowers her gaze as she mutters displeasedly.
Juice's brows furrow in concern, but Fortuna does not respond. Instead Emilia toddles back to them, her cheeks puffed out.

Emilia: “Aaugh! Mother Fortuna, Juice, how come you're not chasing me! We're playing tag! You have to chase!”

Juice: “Ah! My deepest apologies, Emilia-sama. The failing of this negligent Romanée-Conti, to persist lifelong and evermore...”

Fortuna: “Don't spoil her like that, Juice. —Emilia, you do remember why your mother and Juice started chasing you, yes? Girls who don't think about what they've done miff your mother sooo much.”

Emilia: “Eep!”

A hint of anger slips into Fortuna's smile, prompting young Emilia's shoulders to hitch.
She thinks back on why the two were chasing her, and realises that she has needlessly riled a hornet's nest. Her face pales as she giggles in an attempt to distract from the issue, then turns and breaks into a run and—

Fortuna: “No luck. Mother Fortuna caught you.”

Emilia: “Awuh! I'm sorry Mother Fortuna! It's not what you think! The fairies wanted to play, and

said to go outside, and so...”

Fortuna: “Girls who blame other people, or rather fairies, also miff your mother. Do you understand, Emilia?”

Caught in a hug from behind, Emilia panics while Fortuna speaks to her in whispers. Young Emilia stops struggling and hangs her head dejectedly.

Emilia: “I'm sorry, Mother Fortuna. The room was so boring, and Juice is my friend so I wanted to see him, and I just went out.”

Fortuna: “And then you ran away because I spotted you. You knew that you did something bad. That was something you sooo shouldn't have done.”

Emilia: “I know...”

Fortuna: “You mustn't break promises. Keeping promises is important. Promises are a representation of trust, and breaking them means betraying that trust. Don't do it.”

Close to tears, Emilia attempts to look down—when her face is caught between two hands, and she is forced to look properly into that pair of amethyst eyes.

Fortuna: “Emilia, promise me. You'll keep your promises from now on.”

Emilia: “Mmhm... yes, I promise. I'm so sorry, Mother.”

Fortuna: “Alright. Everything's fine then.”

Having heard Emilia's teary-eyed pledge, Fortuna holds her beloved daughter to her chest.
She tenderly strokes sobbing Emilia's silver hair, accepting her child's growing up with a gentle sigh. When,

Fortuna: “Juice? What are you doing over there?”

Juice: “I-I have... w-witnessed, far too brilliant a sight... the tears... beyond my control...”

Juice squats in the shade of a tree as he presses a handkerchief to his face, bawling. Apparently hearing that mother-daughter conversation had sent him over the emotional edge.
Seeing Juice cry both in her recovered memories and during the TRIAL leads Emilia to remember that he was a weepy drunk. A warmth unfurls through her chest.

Fortuna: “But anyway, Emilia. These fairies you mentioned are...?”

Leaving aside Juice as he blows his nose with the tissue, Fortuna gets back to a part of Emilia's testimony which bothered her. With the topic of FAIRIES raised, Emilia looks up at Fortuna from within her embrace, her eyes still red.

Emilia: “Oh, they're...”

Emilia: “Fairies, come here.”

Young Emilia reaches out her arm as she speaks to the world.

As if her pale fingertips were a perch, several glowing lights appear, drifting over to convene around her hand.
Both Fortuna and Juice look shocked to witness the sight.

Fortuna: “It couldn't be, minor spirits? And so many of them. ...How?”

Emilia: “...? I talked to them, and lots of them came out. They come out when I'm playing in the Princess Room now.”

Juice: “To conduct this sum of minor spirits at such an age... Emilia-sama, it seems that you possess distinguishable aptitude for spiritualism.”

Emilia: “Aptytoode, for spiritualism?”

Juice: “These who you call fairies are beings known as minor spirits. Extant ubiquitously throughout the world, open your heart to them to converse and form a contract. Those who are favoured by spirits, and borrow their strength to achieve the extraordinary, are referred to as spiritualists.”

Emilia: “I can be one of those?”

Juice: “Certainly. Proceed to mature in good health, favoured by spirits as is presently so... undoubtedly, many spirits, and more powerful spirits, will come under your direction.”

Emilia's face beams in hearing Juice's explanation.
But Fortuna stands up, and nudges her elbow into Juice's side.

Fortuna: “Hold on, Juice. No funny talk. Going off saying that managing a few minor spirits makes you a spiritualist... and, Emilia doesn't need it.”

Juice: “So might be how you opine, but Emilia-sama shall not remain a child indefinitely. It will happen that she cannot stay at your side. My belief would find its additional necessity in her establishment of herself as herself once that eventuality comes.”

Fortuna and Juice, arguing over where Emilia's education should be focused.
Watching their exchange from aside, the older Emilia inevitably has to think it.

Emilia: “Mother Fortuna and Juice are like a mom and dad.”

Fortuna: “Wh!?”

Without a trace of ill will in her expression, young Emilia states the exact thing that older Emilia thinks.
Emilia watches Fortuna's face redden while agreeing with the fact that, yes, her younger self had thought the same thing.

Fortuna: “Okay, Emilia, don't say anything weird. Your mother and Juice have known each other for a very very long time, our relationship isn't one you can talk about like that.”

Juice: “Exactly, Emilia-sama. Fortuna-sama and myself have known each other for a very long time... in fact, it would have been since being in the company of your mother and father...”

Fortuna: “—Juice.”

Fortuna had started with frantic explanations, but Juice's loose lips lead her tone to plummet. Juice looks to sense his mistake as he puts his hand to his mouth.

Juice: “Forgive me.”

Emilia: “Mother, and father?”

Fortuna: “I'm sorry, Emilia. We'll talk about that another time. But anyway you go back to the room. I haven't forgiven the fact that you snuck out.”

Emilia: “Hrmp... You're so mean, Mother Fortuna...”

Feeling that Fortuna is trying to fudge the conversation, Emilia puffs out her cheeks to display her displeasure. But Fortuna appears stubborn, and puts her hands to Emilia's puffed cheeks, pressing down to make her expel the air.
With the air puffed out of Emilia's mouth, Fortuna goes down to match Emilia's eye level.

Fortuna: “Be a good girl, behave. This isn't the last time you're going to get to see Juice. I'll, erm... make another chance for you to see him.”

Emilia: “Really!? You promise? No going back on it?”

Fortuna: “Oh, no, this girl. Just where could she've learned to be so fussy?”

Fortuna gives Emilia a wry smile as she brings up the previously-covered topic of promises, before taking her in an embrace.

Fortuna: “Yes, I promise. This is a promise between you and me, one that is sooo important.”

Emilia: “...Okay then. I'll go back to the room.”

Young Emilia gives Fortuna a trusting nod.
Released from the hug, Emilia runs over to Juice before she can start her return to the Princess Room. She extends her hand to Juice, smiling.

Emilia: “See you, Juice. Promise that we'll meet again.”

Juice: “—Yes, assuredly. May we make audience again in the future. I shall be awaiting the day.”

Juice takes the small, extended hand, completing the handshake.
With her smile met with a smile, Emilia nods and nods and nods before releasing her hand and reporting her goodbye.

Young Emilia readies to return to the Princess Room—

Echidna: “Here they are.”

Whispers Echidna, having watched over everything in silence until now.
Emilia hears Echidna clearly and raises her head, looking around to try and determine what Echidna is referring to—and spots it.

Emilia: “—”

A white young man.
White skin, white hair. He wears a simple shirt and pants, nothing ornate about him. His face does have its looks, but even said he is lacking in anything defining, his appearance utterly banal.
He could mix into a crowd and disappear instantly with how he epitomized any lack of individuality, but his presence right here, right now, made him seem an abnormal kind of outsider.

Fortuna: “...Who're you!?”

Fortuna in the memory also notices the man, immediately holding Emilia close as she voices her clear caution.
The man leans against a tree trunk as he runs his hand through his white hair.

Man: “Don't you think it follows reasonable sense that when asking a person for their name, you begin by introducing yourself first?”

The reply makes Fortuna's eyebrow twitch.
Seeing this, the man's mouth twists, the atmosphere he emits dismal.

Man: “Who, is one of those questions where when you give this response I can only think it as stale and trite but, now that I've actually wandered into a context fitting for that kind of thing why aha I can indeed understand why people have the urge to say this. Here are fellow persons for the first time making the presence of the other. Our standings are supposed to be definitively equal as we begin in our efforts to establish a relationship, but now we have a condescending someone trying to extort a name unilaterally. I wonder if it's occurred to you. That you're unconsciously, unsympathetically, and by your own accord treating me as inferior, has that occurred to you?”

Fortuna: “...For a man, you sure love talking.”

Man: “For a man, is where your prejudice shows though and indicates how ignorant you are to comparative examples of men. And first of all what right do you think you have to take these creatures called MEN, a class which includes more individuals spread throughout the world than what is conceivably countable, and compare me to them? This attitude of yours... it's giving me a little trouble to overlook. It's all lacking in any level of reasonable courtesy. It's taking this individual I am, taking my rights, and disregarding them.”

It appears that Fortuna's every word has made the lunacy in the man's speech escalate.
With the man growing more and more dangerous, Fortuna exposes her wariness as she braces herself for combat. But the one to pull the breaks is Juice, standing beside her.
He looks up at the white man, his expression stern as he opens his mouth to speak:

Juice: “Regulus Corneas! For what reason are you here! We surely had an immutable promise that I would be the only one involved in this affair!”

Regulus: “Call it an immutable promise or call it whatever you want, it's all just you going off saying things yourself and presuming things yourself in what is actually just a normal agreement. Look at you trying to push people into submission with that domineering phrasing of yours, what great and pompous drivel you've started spewing from your spirit mouth. Trying to restrict my daily actions, even though I'm not permitted any kind of perfidious behaviour anyway... so that's what a spirit is? Have you ever considered putting a stop on the infringements you're making to my mind

and person?”

Juice: “Nothing you say presents an answer! If you were displeased with the agreement, we could have discussed it at church! What have you appeared here for! And who told you that this place is...”

???: “—This has happened on my instruction.”

Juice's voice trembles in rage as he yells at Regulus, the displeased young man.
But cutting into their argument, never once before heard in this altercation, is the voice of a woman.

Everyone watching the scene has their own reaction to that voice.

A shiver arises in Juice's eyes, Fortuna's eyes blaze in fury, young Emilia shakes her head as she tears up in her mother's arms, Regulus crafts an ominous smile.

Emilia as she watches the memory swallows her breath, while Echidna merely closes her eyes.

She comes forward, this single girl.
This character standing beside Regulus as he looks down at Emilia, Juice, and Fortuna, is a girl so beautiful that all who see her would tremble.

Her long, platinum hair gleams sweetly as if sunlight given form, flowing to her slender neck and streaming down her back.
Long eyelashes border her eyes, their shade so deep a blue that they seem to entrap the world, her looks so overwhelmingly attractive that even a god would hesitate to touch her fingers, with all her perfect pulchritude.
Her petite frame is adorable enough that even having the wind cradle her appears dangerous. What garbs her is merely a single white cloth, the atmosphere suggesting that world would permit nothing else to touch her skin.

The presence she holds is not that of an ordinary person, and her appearance is not what an ordinary person would have.
Her voice possesses an almost magical allure, binding the minds and bodies of those who hear it, nobody present here capable of saying anything any more.

Girl: “Is there something wrong? Cardinal Romanée-Conti?”

Tilting her head, the girl fires her question.
Being looked at by her, being talked to by her. Just the fact that any one of her actions are aimed at oneself is enough to inspire an overwhelming euphoria, such that death would not be an aversive prospect, the sensation unavoidable.
Although knowing that this is the past, Emilia as she looks up at the girl feels her mouth rapidly going dry.

—This thing is dangerous.

Juice: “Why are you... no, Regulus Corneas! Why have you brought her here!”

Juice grits his teeth, in rejection of the emotions swelling up inside him.

—This thing, is dangerous.

Regulus: “Bringing people places, do you think it's possible for me of all people to pull that kind of stunt with how it infringes on the will of others? It is by her own volition that we are in company. Your attempts to make all of this my fault are yes an amazing exhibition of prejudice. I'd appreciate you not to go off passing your unasked-for judgements on this human being that I am.”

Girl: “Cardinal Regulus. He is rattled. Do not fault him too much.”

The corners of Regulus's mouth tremble, in a frantic attempt to keep ecstasy from showing on his face as he bows respectfully.

It's strange.
Regulus is overwhelming, an outsider. That he is so obediently obeying her will illustrates beyond any parallel how abnormal this girl is.

Looking up at the girl, Juice's eyes remain trembling in shock and confusion as he shakes his head.

Juice: “That is... remarkably, cruel... Pandora-sama...”

Juice's breathy voice leads the girl to smile faintly.
This girl's smile, blessed by the world and harbinger of even greater felicity. The girl, Pandora, answers all the gazes aimed at her with a tolerance that permits everything.

She spreads her arms wide, as if her small reach will cradle everything that there is.

Pandora: “Now, shall we begin? —For the fulfilment of cardinal desire of us witch cultists.”

Fortuna: “PANDORAAAAAAAAAAAA!!”

With young Emilia protected behind her, Fortuna thrusts out her arms to generate a blue magic circle before her. Icicles materialize with overwhelming momentum, their aim set directly on Pandora.

Pandora: “Goodness.”

Fortuna: “Be impaled, and apologize to my brother and the rest!!”

Pandora casually puts her hand to her mouth. Fortuna strikes.
Each of the icicles is large an adult's arm, and their number is near to twenty. They form at speeds fast enough to be continuous, shooting one after another—spearing into the astonished girl and exploding into white vapour.

The crackling of shattering ice rains upon the crackling of shattering ice without end, the white smoke cloaking over the surroundings as Fortuna regardless relents not a second in her attack.
Young Emilia's mouth gapes open as before her stands Fortuna, her beautiful face twisted in rage as she hoists up her arms.

Fortuna: “AaAand now—!!”

Following the motion of her arms as she swings them down, a ball of ice massive enough to decimate the forest trees plummets down from above. Its aim is true as it slams into the spot where

Pandora was, white demise drilling itself into the forest ground, marking the grave.

Not even the older Emilia has anything she can say about Fortuna's overwhelming magical prowess. Even supposing that Emilia had Puck's help, like hell she would handle magic that proficiently. She had never made low estimations of her mother, but learning that her strength was greater than what she remembered makes her shiver.
However,

Regulus: “Say... you were paying me absolutely no attention during any of that, were you? You weren't paying me even the slightest thought and you still opted for an attack that would entangle me in it, honestly isn't that a bit suspect? Do you know what it means? What it means is that you trampled over my life, my being, my rights.”

Immediately following the protracted complaint, the massive ball of ice shatters to pieces from ground-up.
The shards of ice-crystal scatter through the air, dreamlike, the sight of Regulus casually standing there being overwhelming abnormal. The sight of Pandora standing beside him uninjured, also.

Regulus makes a show of easily brushing off his coat. Despite the ferocity of the attack he sustains not a single injury, in fact not even his clothes are sullied in the least. Pandora adjusts her bangs slightly, disrupted by air pressure as they.
Most likely Regulus, standing before Pandora, had protected her—but it's all preposterous. Emilia has not a clue as to what happened.

Echidna: “So that's this generation's Greed. Considering what an impossible fluke of a meeting it is for me to be witnessing this, it really is very fascinating.”

Emilia: “You know what that was?”

Emilia addresses Echidna, who has moved out of the tree-shade and into a spot where she can better observe the fight. Echidna glances at Emilia, her eyes narrowing.

Echidna: “I can make a guess, but it's far from anything definite. If we can keep watching this a little longer, I might be able to figure out what's going on, but... It doesn't seem that circumstances will allow for that.”

Emilia: “What do you...”

Echidna: “There they go.”

Although frustrated, Emilia directs her gaze forward.

Even with Fortuna's offensive, the fight has produced zero results.
Seeing Regulus stepping forward and looking displeased, Juice stretches out his arm.

Juice: “Fortuna-sama, I ask that you take Emilia-sama and withdraw! We are presently powerless against Regulus Corneas!”

Fortuna: “You...! That woman is right there, and you're telling me to stand down!?”

Juice: “Consider the situation! Who is it that you are protecting in this instant!”

Fortuna: “—!”

Juice bellows at the belligerent Fortuna. Her face stiffening in shock, Fortuna glances behind her, to find young Emilia holding anxiously onto her mother's clothes.

Emilia: “M-Mother...”

Fortuna: “Emilia!”

Juice: “Please withdraw. From there, send reinforcements to the village. The followers who accompanied me to this place share me in my thoughts. They will surely aid you.”

Fortuna: “If we do that, what will you do?”

Fortuna bends down and holds Emilia to her chest, Juice speaking calmly.
She stands up with Emilia in her embrace, looking anxiously at Juice.

Juice: “—Please quell your worry. I am not remaining behind devoid of any scheme.”

Juice, although exuding tension, responds to Fortuna's concerned gaze with a smile.
Seeing it, Fortuna closes her eyes.

Fortuna: “I'm coming back to help you.”

With that, Fortuna breaks into a run through the forest, Emilia in her arms.
Emilia struggles in her grip, peeks her head out from over Fortuna's shoulder.

Emilia: “JUICE!!”

Juice: “—”

Juice turns to glance at Emilia, his expression somehow relieved as he raises his hand.
With that, and with Fortuna and Emilia sprinting deep into the forest, Juice disappears from the couple's view.

Emilia: “...It's strange. Me, I was taken away, so I shouldn't be seeing what happens here.”

Echidna: “Don't disparage my architecture of these worlds of memory. Your memories may be the starting point, but the construction comes from my algorithms and takes reference from the Book of Wisdom. To an extent, it's simple to compensate for the events which you haven't seen. Although...”

Standing aside the bewildered Emilia, Echidna's gaze tracks the path of Fortuna's escape.

Echidna: “Speaking for the sake of overcoming your TRIAL, it's correct that we follow them. What do you think? Should we transition over?”

Echidna indirectly announces that Emilia ought to follow Fortuna. Which rationally speaking is a correct statement. The TRIAL is concerned with Emilia's past, so she should be prioritizing whatever young Emilia is going to see and do now. But,

Emilia: “Echidna... that kind of sounded like you're trying to make me go that way.”

Echidna: “...”

Emilia: “Me overthinking... isn't it. Your phrasing and attitude just then was weird.”

Echidna: “...Whatever you think is up to you. And also, this side's moving again as well.”

Echidna goes without answering Emilia's question, her expression blank as she steps back a small distance. Her retreat is probably to avoid getting showered any side-damages from the imminently-starting fight.
No matter how terrible the damages are, nothing will affect Emilia or Echidna. But if anything alters the surroundings, they can not avoid the effect that will have on the earth they are standing on.

Regulus: “Well wasn't that cool of you, Betelgeux. But whose permission do you think you have to be doing these things? Do you have any idea at all why I'm here? Think about it in any way you can possibly conceive, and it's obvious I'm here on business. Not with you, with the other one. You getting in my way here means you're obstructing me from doing what I ought to do. It's infringing, my rights.”

Juice: “Say anything you wish, Regulus Corneas. But, with my being at stake, I must not allow you any passage further!”

Regulus: “Well said. Not that I could give less of a care about the founder of the Witch Cult, but how wonderfully said, when it was some smidgen of past contributions that landed you in the seat you're occupying. How can you possibly believe that you have any hope of beating me, properly chosen into my seat as I am?”

Juice: “That... I will now present.”

Regulus's anger intensifies over the course of his egotistical strings of logic. Juice responds quietly. His hand reaches into his vestments, his expression steeled with resolve. To Emilia it looked the expression of a man resolved for DEATH.

Emilia: “No... Juice, what are you doing!?”

Emilia's vicarious experience of her past has led her to remember her nickname for him.
With the situation such that he is resolved for death, Emilia promptly reaches out her arm in an attempt to stop him. But the present Emilia has to means to influence the past.
Her outstretched hand passes through him, feeling no touch of the palm that she had grasped in her youth.

Regulus: “That's...”

From his pocket, Juice withdraws a small, black box.
Regulus's brows furrow at first, but he promptly seems to guess at the thing's identity as his eyes shoot open wide. With Regulus showing shock for the first time, Juice's resolute gaze pierces through him.

Juice: “You should be able to sense it. Your hands have also held it once before.”

Regulus: “I am aware. Very aware, and so my jaw's too busy gaping at your abject stupidity for me to speak. Perhaps you were keeping that hidden on your person thinking it'd be your ace or

whatever else idea you've come up with, but couldn't you tell from the moment you had it anywhere near you? You! Are unqualified to have that! It wasn't anything else, it's the thing that's decided that!”

Juice: “...Indeed, my compatibility with it is none. Owing to that, I have merely held what was entrusted to me and nothing else. However, it also serves for the sake of junctures such as these.”

Pandora: “Cardinal Betelgeux Romanée-Conti.”

Juice responds quietly to the infuriated Regulus.
Pandora, not having moved an inch from her original spot, cuts into their conversation.

Juice raises his head. Pandora's face is tranquil.

Pandora: “Happy travels.”

Juice: “—”

No hostility or goodwill or ill will or nothing, just simple words of blessing.
And so being, Emilia cannot prevent her horror, and neither can Juice.

The blessing almost looks to have butchered Juice entirely as he grimaces, enduring the pain. He twists the box in his hand, taking off the lid.
Inside the box upon his palm is a black, squirming SOMETHING.

Juice: “I beg you forgive me, Flugel-sama.”

With that, Juice pressed both the dark something and the box to his chest.
Instantly, the something snaps onto Juice's body like droplets of water, compounding in volume explosively to envelop him wholly.
It's as if Juice is being absorbed by some viscous creature. Emilia shrieks in silent grief as the SOMETHING shrouds Juice's body, constricts him.

Regulus: “Imbecile.”

Spits Regulus, for the first time phrasing his judgements succinctly.
His scornful gaze is fixed on Juice, enveloped in the SOMETHING as he hoists his arms to the heavens, his mouth agape and shrieking. Not as if in pain, not as if in joy, but as if some other emotion is throwing his being into disarray.

Emilia: “—”

A baffling sound joins the shrieking.
The sound of someone clapping their hands.

Pandora: “Magnificent.”

Whispers platinum Pandora as she gives her applause.
As she watches Juice, swallowed and panting in the wake of the emotional torrent, her cheeks redden in ecstasy.
The slight hitch in her breathing is, unmistakably, because the scene is exciting her.

Regulus: “Pandora-sama?”

Emilia is not the only one with questions about Pandora's attitude, for Regulus speaks.
He furrows his brows at the clapping Pandora. She glances back at Regulus with her cheeks still red, aborting her applause to point at Juice.

Pandora: “Cardinal Regulus Corneas.”

Regulus: “Yes.”

Pandora: “He is coming.”

Instantly, Regulus flips to hang upside down, and goes flung hurtling high into the sky overhead.

Regulus: “Wha—?”

It's the same kind of infantile violence as grabbing a doll by the leg and flinging the thing away.
Regulus has not a clue as to what is happening either, making a dumb noise as he hits the apex of the throw—only to slam back down to the earth. Having obviously transcended terminal velocity in his fall, it seems he had been thrown with his LEG STILL GRABBED.

Helpless, Regulus smashes to the ground head-first.
Out thunders the echoing boom as the earth bursts apart, the trees caught in the crash falling and falling in sequence toward Regulus's point of impact. The secondary attack pins Regulus beneath the lumber, silence falling upon the forest.

Emilia loses her speech, her blank mind working frantically to figure out what on earth just happened.
She didn't see a single thing. But supposing there is something that she did make out—

???: “I am sure I did... INFORM.”

Fallen to his knees and robed in black vestment, blood streams from the man's eyes as he gazes forward.
Glaring at the gaps between the trees and the rising plumes of dust, breathing ragged and having turned his resolve into a victorious bet, is this man.

Freed from the agony of being shrouded in black SOMETHING, he stands.

He is—not Juice. This man, is Betelgeux Romanée-Conti.

Betelgeux:
“I will not allow you to pursue them... you shall pass—NO FURTHER!!”